

## **King County Agriculture Commission**

(notes from meeting)

**November 7, 2005**

Issaquah Fish Hatchery

Issaquah, WA

Commissioners Present: Judy Duff, Bob Tidball, Roger Calhoun, Ben Kodama, Nancy Hutto

Commissioners Absent: Ewing Stringfellow, George Irwin, Michelle Blakely, Dick Gradwold

Staff: Judy Herring, Claire Dyckman King County (KC) Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) Agriculture Programs; Bob Burns, KC Parks; Kevin Brown, KC Parks.

Guest Agency Staff: Geoff Reed, Co-Director, King Conservation District (KCD); Brad Gaolach, Chair, WSU Extension Program; Bob Burns, Deputy Director, KC Parks DNRP Kevin Brown, Director, KC Parks.

Guests: Maxine Keesling, Bill Knutsen, Bert Loosmore, Anne Mack

A quorum was not attained so no official minutes are recorded. The date was perhaps in conflict with the Washington Cattlemen's Association and the Tilth annual meetings. Galia Bullock has decided to end her term as a Commissioner.

### *Commission Round Table:*

Bob reported on the Global Climate Change conference: items for agriculture included potential water issues, new or increased pests, the current price of fuel, use of biodiesel.

Roger reported on the apparent success of Harvest Celebration and noted that there are large numbers of people who want to be local.

Nancy said honey has been extracted, bees put to bed.

Judy noted that future Commission Minutes should be brief, summarizing decisions using Robert's Rules of order, rather than writing a transcript of the meeting.

*Staff Reports:* Judy Herring, WLRD Agriculture program reported:

- 10 acres available for leasing for one year, but no water available
- Plantings in the Snoqualmie will continue in November
- The Vote on the Sammamish APD rezone was postponed until the following Monday.

Geoff Reed, KCD reported:

- Successful biodiesel workshop in November, fuel available locally.
- KCD has just hired a new local farm planner, Ann Magniochi from the Snoqualmie.
- The ordinance before the King County Council – 0463- on the proposed \$10 KCD assessment contains a different allocation (\$6 to the Watershed Resource Inventory Areas WRIA's, split in a 4;4;2 ration among the WRIA's, with the \$2 going to the Snoqualmie; \$2 to the jurisdiction of origin; and \$2 to the KCD) than that proposed and desired by the District (\$4 to the WRIA's, split equally among the three WRIA's; \$2 to the jurisdiction of origin; \$2 to the KCD; and \$1 to a small grants program to be operated by KCD). Geoff said they were looking for a reconciliation. He urged the Commission to read the ordinance on the KCD web-site and to support the proposal of the KCD board of

supervisors. Brad Gaolach of WSU Extension urged the Commission to request that one dollar of the assessment go to Extension to fund their programs that have been cut. Bill Knutsen and Maxine Keesling each spoke in favor of the KCD proposal, and Maxine urged people to read the article on the assessment in the morning papers.

Conservation District Assessment: Discussion ensued. Lacking a quorum, those present wanted a letter written for a commissioner to present at the Hearing. Elements should include:

- Support the KCD Board of Supervisors;
- note that there are other sources for funding the WRIA's,
- note that Extension should get some of the funds. All three agencies – KCD, Extension, and the County – help agriculture address the fisheries challenge, and all three should get some of the resource assessment.

Bob Tidball agreed to read the message at the hearing as the voice of one Commissioner.

60 Acres South/Lake Washington Soccer/Lake Washington Technical College Proposal: Bob Burns and Kevin Brown presented the latest proposal for Lake Washington Soccer and agricultural lands. They noted the role of the Commission in past proposals, and asked for Commission support for this proposal. There is a Memorandum of Understanding among the Soccer Association, Lake Washington Technical College and the County. Those Commissioners present agreed to the concept of this proposal, noting they would like information on a few details: what is allowed by "accessory use or dwelling" on the parcels; what activities would occur on farmland soils; and water availability. Property A should be considered farmable. There may be benefits from Lake Washington Technical College extending their nursery horticultural programs to include agricultural crops. Judy Herring will report back on this issue at a future meeting.

#### *Public Comment*

Maxine Keesling read published articles on the "Sammamish Valley Land Swap" reiterating her concerns on changing the Rural zoning in that APD to Agriculture zoning, and noting the irony of zoning ballfields to Agriculture while precluding soccer. She also reiterated her concerns that open space and conservation often take precedence over agriculture on agricultural lands, using an Oregon article and an example in the Palouse to make her points. (see attachments)

#### *Commission Business*

Because there was no quorum, voting on the offices of the Commission was postponed until the Dec 8 Meeting.

Those present decided to set up a subcommittee to respond to the questions posed to the Commission by WLRD Director, Mark Isaacson, Bob Tidball, Judy Duff, Nancy Hutto, and Roger Calhoun volunteered.

Suggested for the December 8 Meeting: update on Hwy 164 proposal, a process to formulate new covenants for the FPP program, and a discussion of creative options for holding the county to reducing the net loss of farmland of outside the APD.

Judy Duff moved to adjourn the meeting.